REQUEST FOR APPLICATION (RFA)

Number:	RFA-263-15-000001
Title:	The Higher Education Partnerships Program (HEPP)

Issuance Date:	December 4th, 2014
Closing date for Submission Questions:	December 18th, 2014 05:00 pm (EST)
Closing Date and Time for Application Submission:	February 18th, 2015 05:00 pm (EST)

Dear Sir/Madam:

The United States Agency for International Development mission to Egypt (USAID/Egypt) seeks applications from U.S. and Non-U.S. Non-Governmental Organizations, Colleges and Universities, and For-profit Organizations subject to the conditions of this Funding Opportunity for the "Higher Education Partnerships Program (HEPP)" project. The estimated overall amount of this activity is USD$57 million over a five year life of project.

For the purposes of this Request for Application (RFA), the term "Award" is synonymous with "Cooperative Agreement"; "Grantee" is synonymous with "Recipient". The authority for the RFA is found in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended.

Pursuant to 22 CFR 226.81 (or any successor provision(s)), it is USAID policy not to award profit under assistance instruments. However, all reasonable, allocable and allowable expenses, both direct and indirect, which are related to the agreement program and are in accordance with applicable cost standards (22 CFR 226 (or any successor provision(s)), 2 CFR Part 200, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 31 for-profit organizations), may be paid under the Cooperative Agreement.

This funding opportunity is posted on www.grants.gov and may be amended.   As the Request for Application (RFA) may be amended, potential Applicants should regularly check the site to ensure they have the latest information pertaining to this RFA. Questions and answers will be posted through www.grants.gov as well.

Only electronic applications will be considered received.   USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes associated with electronic submissions.

Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government, nor does it commit the Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. Award will be made subject to the availability of funds. Final award of any resultant grant(s) cannot be made until funds have been fully appropriated, allocated and committed through internal USAID procedures. While it is anticipated that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential Applicants are hereby notified of these requirements and conditions for award. Applications

are submitted at the risk of the Applicant; should circumstances prevent award of a Cooperative Agreement, all preparation and submission costs are at the Applicant's expense.

To be eligible for award, the Applicant must provide all required information in their application, including the requirements found in any attachments to this Grants.gov posting.

This RFA consists of this cover letter plus the following Sections:
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Section II - Award information
Section III - Eligibility Information
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Each section is provided as an attachment except for the two which are provided below:

SECTION VII. AGENCY CONTACTS: Any questions concerning the contents of this funding opportunity must be submitted <u>in writing</u> to the following **e-mail address: OET@usaid.gov**.
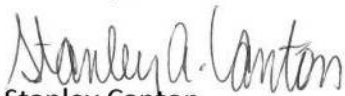
SECTION VIII. OTHER INFORMATION: USAID retains the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

Eligible organizations interested in submitting an application are encouraged to read this RFA thoroughly to understand the type of program sought and the application submission and evaluation process.

Please note that the RFA is subject to cancellation.

Thank you for your interest in USAID/Egypt programs.

Sincerely,

Stanley Canton
Agreement Officer

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADS	Automated Directives System
AOR/AAOR	Agreement Officer's Representative/Alternate Agreement Officer's Representative
BMW	Bavarian Motor Works
CA	Cooperative Agreement
CAPMAS	Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics
CCR	Central Contractor Registration
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
COP	Chief of Party
DUNS	Data Universal Numbering System
EMMP	Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan
FAA	Foreign Assistance Agreement
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOE	Government of Egypt
HEPP	Higher Education Partnership Program
HICD	Human and Institutional Capacity Development
IEE	Initial Environmental Examination
IT	Information Technology
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
M&M	(project) Mitigation and Monitoring plan
MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education
MOIFT	Ministry of Industry and Foreign Trade
MOOC	Massive Open Online Courses
NAQAAE	National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education
RFA	Request for Application
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
RDI	Research, Development, and Innovation
RF	Results Framework
TA	Technical Assistance
TEC	Technical Evaluation Committee
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

SECTION I – FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

I.A.   Program Description

The U.S. – Egypt Higher Education Partnerships Program

In order to strengthen Egyptian higher education institutions and enhance their ability to develop a globally competitive Egyptian workforce, USAID will support a Higher Education Partnerships Program (HEPP) that closely links Egyptian and U.S. higher education institutions to each other, and with the private sector.

The goal of the five-year, $57 million HEPP is to support 15 to 20 partnerships between universities, technical colleges, and the private sector in Egypt and the United States and to provide technical assistance to the Egyptian public higher education system. The engagement of the U.S. and Egyptian business communities will be essential to identifying critical private sector and economic growth needs that are not currently being met by Egyptian higher education, developing prospective solutions to those shortcomings, and working together to implement, monitor and continuously improve the new approaches.

The partnerships supported by this Program will strengthen the institutional capacity of Egyptian higher education institutions (both universities and technical colleges)[1] by developing new programs that address labor market requirements, upgrading curricula, improving teaching methods, stimulating better applied research and the commercialization of research outcomes, and providing for exchanges between partner institutions, including master and doctoral scholarships to study in the U.S. for individuals that will eventually teach at the university. The partnerships will take different shapes and sizes (a partnership will include at least one institution from each country but might include one U.S. institution and one Egyptian institution), and will address different development challenges.

The Program will seek to build partnerships between Egyptian and U.S. universities and technical colleges, and provide needed technical assistance and training while leveraging significant resources from the private sector and other institutions. Egyptian and U.S. business communities will be engaged to assist in identifying critical workforce needs and potential areas for growth that are currently not being met by the Egyptian higher education system and addressing these needs through their participation in partnerships. Indeed, a key and crosscutting aspect of this Program will involve institutionalizing robust higher education-private sector collaboration in areas critical to Egypt's development and economic prosperity.

The purpose of this Notice of Funding Opportunity (RFA) is to obtain applications from U.S. and non-U.S. organizations with the interest and expertise needed to award and monitor partnership sub-grants or procurement contracts to U.S. and Egyptian higher education institutions and provide technical and logistical support to higher education institutions in Egypt.

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[1] For the purposes of the NFO, the term "higher education institutions" is used throughout this document and refers to U.S. community colleges and universities, and Egyptian technical colleges and universities.

Program Summary

Education and innovation are at the heart of long-term economic growth and will be critical to Egypt's ability to acquire and sustain a competitive advantage in a global knowledge-based economy. Institutions of higher education form the bedrock of knowledge-based economies. Universities often serve as incubators for new ideas, while technical and vocational institutions develop well-trained individuals with industry-specific skills. Given the private sector's interest in increasing its global competitiveness and employing qualified labor, there is a critical need for increased collaboration between the private sector and universities and technical education institutions in Egypt.

Institutes of higher education will play a key role in developing the necessary skills and abilities Egyptian youth need to obtain gainful employment. U.S. and Egyptian higher education partnerships will build the skills and knowledge of university and technical college students, as well as that of the faculty members who will prepare them to join the workforce. Through strong linkages with, and the active engagement of the private sector, partnership activities will strengthen instruction techniques, modernize curricula and degree programs, increase the employability prospects of youth, encourage entrepreneurship, and provide Egyptian youth and faculty members with unprecedented access to international and national professional development opportunities in key sectors. The Program will prioritize providing access to a greater number of employment opportunities to advance women's participation and leadership in the workforce.

Specific objectives of this Program include:

- institutionalizing effective collaboration between U.S. and Egyptian higher education institutions and the private sector;
- transforming faculties within Egyptian institutions of higher education to reflect both the knowledge and skills required of a modern economy;
- building a critical mass of individuals and institutions able to address strategic challenges vital to Egypt's sustainable development and economic prosperity; and
- strengthening the global competitiveness of the Egyptian private sector through partnerships that link the private sector with universities and technical colleges.

The Program will be implemented primarily through a cooperative agreement with an organization that will engage and ensure ongoing collaboration with the private sector, seed and grow U.S./Egyptian higher education partnerships through partnership sub-awards to higher education institutions, support national dialogue with stakeholders and the Egyptian authorities about needed reforms, provide technical assistance on policy reform and management, and ensure robust public knowledge and understanding of the Program. The successful Applicant will facilitate the partnership development process including the award and monitoring of subgrants.

I.B.   Program Relationship to USAID Strategy

The proposed Higher Education Partnerships Program has been developed through extensive consultations with the Government of Egypt including with representatives from the Ministries of Higher Education and

International Cooperation. In addition, the USAID Mission Director presented the Partnership Program to the Minister of Higher Education and the Supreme Council of Universities on February 27, 2014.

Ministries of education are looking towards the private sector to develop innovative partnerships in order to improve education and better prepare graduating students for the global workforce. The Government of Egypt is keen to partner with private companies and align its education objectives with market demands to improve quality education and compensate for shrinking government budgets. In addition, the private sector in Egypt (multinationals and increasingly Egyptian firms) is interested in partnering with the GOE to improve the quality of education. Examples of past partnerships with the private sector include:

1. The Egyptian Education Initiative (EEI) — a multi-stakeholder partnership between three Egyptian ministries (Education, Higher Education, and Communications and Information Technology), six Information Technology (IT) firms (Intel, Microsoft, HP, Siemens, Cisco, Computer Associates), and other donors, implemented from 2006 to 2009. It provided IT to improve the quality of education in over 2,000 Egyptian preparatory schools. USAID provided support for the monitoring and evaluation of the pre-university component of the EEI.

2. USAID and the Education and Employment Alliance (EEA) — the project created Career Development Centers at the faculties of engineering at Cairo and Ain Shams Universities in order to provide mentorship opportunities, training, workshops, job fairs and other practical experiences for students. These programs were developed in close partnership with businesses and training providers to ensure participating students develop those skills most important to employers in Egypt. Partners included Injaz, Microsoft, Proctor & Gamble, Young Arab Leaders, Vodafone, Alashanek Ya Balady, Mobinil, ExxonMobil, British Petroleum, LinkdotNet, DaimlerChrysler, British Engineering Institute, and others. More than 2,000 students benefited from the programs.

3. Entrepreneurial Education — EFHAM, a joint initiative between Cairo University and the Egyptian Junior Business Association, aims to encourage students to create their own entrepreneurial opportunities. This extra-curricular program introduced the values of risk taking, creative and critical thinking, and civic responsibility. Similarly, the Center for Small and Medium Business at Helwan University offered young graduates services and training on how to start up a business and offered access to finance. In this respect corporate social responsibility can play a significant role in developing a coherent vision, plan of action and programs to enhance the impact of entrepreneurship education.

Alignment with Agency Strategy: The activity proposed directly contributes to the Foreign Assistance Strategic Framework Functional Objective "Investing in People".   Partnerships, scholarships and faculty exchanges under the HEPP are aligned with: (i) Goal II in the USAID Education Strategy; (ii) USAID/Egypt's Education and Training priority paper (part of the USAID/Egypt interim strategic plan for 2012-2013); (iii) USAID/Egypt's Workforce Development concept paper; and (iv) USAID/Egypt's Results Framework for Education and Training.

I.C.   Country Context

Egypt is steeped in a tradition of education and scholarship. It is home to El Azhar, one of the world's

oldest universities; the Library of Alexandria, the largest repository of global knowledge in the ancient world; and during Pharaonic times and the Ptolemaic Dynasty, its scholars made significant advancements in the sciences, engineering, mathematics, and medicine. Until the 1950's, Egypt's higher education system was a model for the region. It maintained international standards, educated some of the best students from across the region and generated a sought after source of skilled labor, including Egyptian-trained teachers. Despite this impressive legacy, Egypt now confronts a serious knowledge and skills deficit.

Key Challenges in Higher Education

An overburdened and under-resourced higher education system

The Egyptian education system is the largest in the Middle East and North Africa. It is made up of 19 public universities, 19 private universities, 8 public technical colleges, and 131 private higher institutes, as well as Al-Azhar University (Barsoum 2014). As of 2011/2012, 1.6 million students were enrolled in public universities and around 87,000 in private universities. MoHE statistics from 2009/2010 show over 90,000 enrolled in public technical colleges (MOHE 2013), and in 2011/2012, approximately 33,000 students enrolled in private institutes and approximately 305,000 in higher institutes (CAPMAS 2013). Gross enrollment rates in tertiary institutions are expected to expand from 28% to 35% by 2021 due to increasing demand for higher education (OECD & World Bank 2010). However, the current system is not positioned to provide high quality education that will meet the needs of the labor market. Since 1957, Egypt has undertaken a rapid expansion of its tertiary education system, but this has not been matched by the allocation of sufficient resources for these institutions to flourish as engines of knowledge transfer and creation. With overcrowded classrooms and inadequately equipped laboratories, tertiary institutions have struggled to provide quality education to a large number of students. At the current rate of population growth and enrollment, over the next 15 years, 1.1 million additional students will need to be accommodated into an already burdened higher education system.

Higher Education Institutions are not meeting labor market needs

According to the 2011-2012 Global Competitiveness Report, companies operating or interested in operating in Egypt identify an inadequately educated workforce as one of the two most problematic issues for successfully doing business in the country. Tertiary institutions must be responsive to private sector needs and ensure that graduates are acquiring demand-driven degrees and skills that will prepare them to successfully enter the workforce. Twenty-eight percent of the Egyptian population is between 15 to 29 years of age. Egypt's economy will need to grow at a rapid pace in order to create a sufficient number of jobs for the millions of youth in the country.

Egypt currently suffers from the phenomenon of "educated unemployment." Egyptian college graduates are almost 10 times as likely to be unemployed than individuals with primary educations. The supply of university graduates currently exceeds labor market needs, especially in the humanities and social sciences. Alternatively, despite the growing demand for higher level technical and mid-level professional skills in the national and international labor markets, Egypt has a shortage of skilled technical workers. The country's technical colleges suffer from low prestige and poor facilities, with student enrollment having decreased over the past five years. In order to be more relevant to the needs of the Egyptian economy, the higher education system needs to produce a more balanced supply of well-qualified graduates from technical colleges and universities.

According to the 2010 World Bank Review of Higher Education in Egypt, the lack of balance and fit in graduate supply to the labor market is at the core of Egypt's challenge, not just for university education but for all forms of higher education and for secondary education, including notably technical and vocational education and training which spans both the secondary and tertiary sectors. World Bank consultations with government agencies, employers, educational institutions and students concluded that many graduates seek to work overseas as a means of gaining practical experience and income.

Graduates lack the practical skills to successfully enter the job market

The quality and relevance of education at the university and technical college level needs significant attention in Egypt. The system lacks suitably trained teachers and the proper resources and equipment to produce a qualified workforce. Instructors are poorly paid and often lack teaching and hands-on work experience. Furthermore, students receive inadequate preparation for employment, with outdated curricula that lack practical skills development. The education and training system struggles to produce graduates with the skills employers seek, posing constraints for growth opportunities, particularly in high-skilled economic sectors. Although some efforts to connect businesses and industry to student training programs exist, a significant expansion of such initiatives will be required in order to link students with job opportunities upon graduation. Recently, the GOE made adjustments in technical education where every student has a defined career pathway.

Underdeveloped research, development and innovation capacity

Despite its vast number of graduates with higher degrees in science and engineering, Egypt lacks the infrastructure and labor force to transform the country into a vibrant center of innovation and economic prosperity. Its capacity for basic and applied research is weak, and the country lacks a well-defined strategy for research, development and innovation. Research facilities are highly bureaucratic, poorly financed and largely operate outside of the realm of Egypt's economic activity. Financial regulations make research commercialization extremely challenging. Private sector investment in the research and commercialization of university-generated technologies is hence very low, ranging between 2% - 5%.

Additionally, researchers must often hold multiple jobs to make ends meet, and therefore lack the time to properly engage in research. Research is not an integrated component of university education and knowledge exchange. This separation impedes the multi-disciplinary work necessary for advancing knowledge and the generation of critical thinkers that can produce cutting edge research. This overall environment has resulted in hampered innovation, creativity, scientific development, and hence, economic growth in Egypt.

Women are untapped drivers of economic growth

Egyptian women in the workforce are concentrated in a limited number of sectors, including agriculture, education, public administration, health, and social work. Although women have managed to take some leadership positions in the banking, media, and academic sectors, they are the exceptions. Gender equality continues to persist as a limiting factor in Egypt. The Global Gender Gap Index[2], which

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[2] Ricardo Hausmann, Laura D. Tyson, Saadia Zahidi, World Economic Forum Insight Report
The Global Gender Gap Report 2012. http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GenderGap_Report_2012.pdf

benchmarks national gender gaps on economic, political, education and health based criteria, ranks Egypt 126 out of 134 countries. Labor force participation for women was only 24 percent in 2010 compared to 78% for men. The unemployment rate for women and female youth in 2010 was 20% and 45%, respectively, versus 6% and 19% for men and male youth. A 2010 World Bank Gender Assessment[3] shows that better-educated women are not only more prone to unemployment, but also remain unemployed. Among unemployed women with a technical college diploma or university degree, in 2006 more than 85 percent had been unemployed for longer than a year.

Although women are pursuing tertiary education in larger numbers, comparatively few advance to high leadership positions within their professions, in part due to well-cited cultural and social barriers, as well as self-inhibition. In Egypt, for example, women possess close to half of the postgraduate science positions in Egyptian universities, yet constitute 2% of the higher level professional posts in the sciences. In vocational education, female students have a preference for female dominated sectors such as social sciences, nursing and health studies, and humanities. Females also lack access to technical education among different regions and governorates due to attitudes and biases in communities and families. Moreover, economic costs, social traditions, and cultural beliefs limit female educational opportunities. Indications are that there is a relatively low percentage of female university professors compared to the overall number of female academic staff members working in public higher education. In addition to creating an environment that is more conducive to the professional advancement of women, certain governorates in Egypt also need to close the gender gap in enrollment of women at institutes of higher education. As Egypt seeks to revitalize its economy, it will need to better integrate women into the workforce in order to maximize its economic potential.

A highly centralized higher education system

The current governance and management capacity of universities and technical colleges presents several important challenges. Because the administration of higher education is centralized, entities external to the university and technical college can intervene in and exercise significant power over nearly all aspects of institutional operations and decisions. Budget allocations are not linked to the respective roles and needs of individual institutions. Egypt's higher education institutions lack a sustainable financing system, sufficient autonomy, adequate faculty compensation levels, and merit-based systems of recruitment and promotion. For example, tertiary institutions have very little control of the number of students admitted to their faculties each year, and lack competitive structures and mechanisms to accept donations or generate funds to support improvements to their programs. Students have limited flexibility to move between different academic programs within the system which reflect their interests and career aspirations. Furthermore, universities and research centers have not developed proper regulatory, legal, and policy frameworks to support entrepreneurship and innovation. These factors have resulted in a higher education system that lacks the flexibility to respond to changes in student demand and labor market needs. The GOE is currently working on a new higher education law which will be presented to the new Parliament. Once the new Egyptian Parliament convenes, it is expected that committees and working groups will work on a new 12-year higher education strategy for 2014-2022.

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[3] "World Bank. 2010. Arab Republic of Egypt: Gender assessment 2010. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/3003

Key Challenges in the Egyptian Economy

Egypt has undergone progressive phases of economic liberalization and decentralization in the last 40 years. From 2004 to 2008, the GOE applied an aggressive regulatory and institutional reform program in an effort to bolster foreign direct investment and economic growth. The program succeeded in that GDP increased considerably over the same period. Structural issues, however, prevented many of the benefits from being realized by most Egyptians, and the percentage of the population in poverty increased. The GOE faces many significant challenges. The ability to achieve economic growth and security will be highly dependent on the ability of the economy to generate jobs. At least 850,000 new jobs must be created each year to cope with the increasing numbers of young people leaving technical college and universities and looking for employment. According to the European Union's 2013 Time for Change Report, the underlying economy remains strong, and prospects for growth are positive in manufacturing and construction and there are significant opportunities for expansion in developing sectors of the economy such as agriculture and agro products, business, trade and services, the energy sector and transport.

I.D.   Program Goal

HEPP is designed to support the Government of Egypt (GOE) in improving the quality of its academic programs during an era of increasing globalization, and to enhance the contributions of higher education institutions to the nation's competitiveness. At the same time, the partnerships formed under the Program will advance the USAID assistance goal of an "educated workforce that responds to labor market needs," as well as other GOE and U.S. Government (USG) priorities and objectives. Students who are enrolled or otherwise participating in the academic programs strengthened via these partnerships will be better positioned for success in learning and work.

Enhanced, vital partnerships with industry will be critical to the success of HEPP. Curricula, training, and research are not yet oriented towards the needs of labor market, value chains and industry, or the major socioeconomic and environmental issues facing the country. More data confirmation and rapid technological updating are needed, together with support for entrepreneurship and the creation of more incubators to bring the private sector into universities. The following crosscutting elements must be addressed across the portfolio of U.S. and Egyptian partnerships formed under the Program:

- Engagement of the private sector as an integral partner – including its substantive input into problem definition, Program priorities, new program development, curricular change, research (in the case of universities), and student career development. There must be commitment on the part of faculty leadership to sustain practices that promote interest in continued and improved long-term relationships between universities and the private sector.
- The outreach to and inclusion of underserved populations, particularly women, in Program activities. To the extent that women are under-represented in university leadership or specific disciplines, the Program will work to address this disparity.
- Integration of opportunities to use open education resources and distance education, where feasible, to allow for greater access to the partnerships and sustain their results. Leading American universities are developing platforms for massive open online courses (MOOCs) that can be leveraged to enhance learning and teaching activities undertaken under the Program, as well as alleviate the chronic problem of overcrowded classrooms.

- A commitment to applied and relevant outcomes – including new courses, novel training approaches, innovative research, focused community service, or new types of extension services. Higher education – even in the best systems in the world, such as the U.S. – often suffers an inability to effectively translate its efforts to relevant social, economic, and political outcomes. The partnerships funded by this Program will implement activities that yield relevant and practical outcomes that significantly expand the reach, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainable impact of USAID's investments.
- Consideration and integration of the findings of a forthcoming USAID-funded labor market and institutional assessment that will provide guidance on priority sectors and readiness of higher education institutions to participate. The Ministry of Higher Education has indicated that its sectoral priorities include nursing, business, and law and consideration of these sectors for partnerships will be encouraged.
- A willingness to structure and finance project activities to ensure the long-term financial and institutional sustainability of the degrees, curriculum improvements, Research, Development, and Innovation (RDI) Hubs, and other achievements realized under the HEPP.
- A commitment to the support of a broad range of exchanges (for faculty, students, and administrators, and both short- and long-term opportunities) that promote exposure to new approaches and ideas.
- A commitment to the support of internship programs for students that promote hands-on learning and linkages to the private sector.
- Engagement of higher education institutions from throughout Egypt in partnerships.
- A commitment to support activities that address Egyptian Higher Education Institutions' goals and objectives as they define them.
- In keeping with USAID's "Local Solutions" approach to working with host country organizations, a use of local financial management and procurement systems (of the Egyptian Ministry of Higher Education, universities, and technical colleges) to implement the Program whenever it is possible and prudent to do so.

Engaging key stakeholders is of vital importance to the Program. To support this, USAID will establish an advisory committee to help the program link with the private sector and the Government of Egypt and provide current, relevant input on priority industry sectors and trends in higher education in support of the partnerships formed.

I.E.   Program Objectives and Outcomes

The objectives of the U.S. Egypt Higher Education Partnerships Program are to:

1) Improve the quality and relevance of tertiary education;

2) Promote research, development, and innovation (RDI) in national priority development areas; and

3) Improve the institutional governance and management of the Egyptian higher education system through targeted activities.

The U.S. – Egypt Higher Education Partnerships Program will establish 15-20 higher education partnerships between US universities and community colleges, and Egyptian universities and technical colleges, and will provide technical assistance to the Egyptian public higher education system to produce an educated workforce that responds to labor market needs. Partnerships will engage the private sector to identify priority private sector needs, develop new degree and diploma programs, revise curricula, improve teaching methods, support cutting-edge research, improve laboratory infrastructure and basic equipment, and provide exchanges between partner institutions and scholarships as appropriate. The partnerships will take different shapes and sizes (i.e. some might include one US institution and one Egyptian institution, while others might include multiple institutions from one or both sides), to address different development challenges, and build strong educational, economic and commercial ties between Egypt and the United States.

In response to this RFA, Applicants are expected to propose an effective process for establishing desired partnerships that, through the collaboration of the institutions involved, will achieve the program objectives outlined below. Applicants are not expected to describe specific partnerships to be formed; however, illustrative examples can be included.

The Recipient will award and monitor the partnership sub-grants and provide U.S. technical assistance and training that will improve the governance and management of the Egyptian higher education institutions.

Partnership Activities

Objective 1: Improving the Quality and Relevance of Tertiary Education

Institutions of higher education play a key role in developing the necessary skills and abilities Egyptian youth need to obtain gainful employment in a globalized knowledge economy. This objective focuses on strengthening Egyptian higher education institutions to enable them to build the skills and knowledge of both university and technical college students, as well as those of the faculty members who will prepare them to join the workforce. Due to the significant challenges faced by technical colleges, particular focus and support may be required to improve and modernize curricula, instructors' subject matter knowledge, educational approaches, facilities and equipment.

Under this objective, partnerships between U.S. and Egyptian higher education institutions must incorporate the engagement, and where possible, financial support of the private sector to promote the development of curriculum, practical learning opportunities, and internships tied to current labor market opportunities and needs. While technical colleges have had some success in engaging in partnerships with multinational private sector companies (e.g., Americana and BMW), they have had less success developing partnerships with local or national private sector companies. Partnerships must engage the private sector in efforts that improve the relevance of instruction and curricula, and provide opportunities for both training for students and quality jobs for graduates.

The overall goal of this objective is to create a critical mass of youth and women with hands-on experience and expertise in defined areas related to private sector needs and Egypt's development challenges.

Outcome 1.1: Curriculum reform and improvement of quality degree and diploma programs

Wide ranging curriculum reform is necessary to make courses and degrees relevant to the job market. In some cases, the establishment of new degree programs may be required. Whenever possible, this process must use an inter-disciplinary approach, relating courses and subject matter to actual needs rather than traditional academic silos. Modules on "soft skills" such as communication, team work, problem solving, reliability, adaptability, and entrepreneurship need to be integrated into the curriculum. The curriculum reform process will involve the faculties and staff at selected universities and technical colleges with input from MOHE and U.S. university partners, as well as business community stakeholders. Recommendations will be vetted by the appropriate existing university and technical college curriculum committee, the National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) and MOHE. Course syllabi will then be developed including options for research and internships. When appropriate, opportunities for dual degree programs with U.S. institutions can be pursued as these degrees tend to be highly valued by Egyptians.

To increase the employability prospects of youth, the Program will integrate activities that offer real-world learning opportunities. Illustrative activities might include internship programs providing youth with opportunities to gain practical experiences in the private and public sector. For example, programs could facilitate work experiences in high-growth companies or start-ups in technology hubs like Silicon Valley or Austin, Texas or offer summer research opportunities at cutting edge multi-disciplinary U.S. research laboratories.

The integration of innovation and entrepreneurship into relevant programs must be supported when appropriate. Programs of focus at universities and technical colleges could include, but are not limited to, engineering, sciences, health, agriculture, education, and commerce.

Outcome 1.1 Expected Results
- The introduction or improvement of quality degree programs relevant to the job market and emerging growth sectors. The establishment of internationally recognized dual degree programs, where appropriate;
- Strong and sustained linkages between university/technical college faculty members and private sector businesses that result in real-world learning opportunities for Egyptian university and technical college students;
- Comprehensive restructuring of existing technical college programs that would include curriculum revisions, upgrades of the instructional approach, incorporation of industry-based practical learning opportunities, and systems to link graduates to employment opportunities;
- Development of new model technical college programs in emerging sectors (e.g. robotics, renewable energies, etc.) that require skilled technicians and intensively engage private sector partners; and
- Development and use of improved financial planning approaches to assure future sustainability of new and improved programs.

Outcome 1.2: Widespread use of instructional techniques that provide dynamic, engaging learning opportunities and incorporate real-world applications.
The Program aims to generate hundreds of faculty members with improved teaching skills.   Partnerships must promote capacity building activities that will develop and support a cadre of educators skilled in up-

to-date instruction techniques and possessing the relevant knowledge needed to prepare students for the labor market.

Outcome 1.2 Expected Results
- Increased number of professors and instructors with improved academic and technical skills and the ability to promote innovation and entrepreneurship;
- A cadre of professors and instructors at Egyptian higher education institutions with improved teaching skills; and
- Innovative IT platforms used to deliver instruction, where appropriate.

Objective 1 will be implemented primarily through partnership sub-grants to be awarded to U.S. and Egyptian higher education institutions. The successful Applicant will be responsible for awarding these sub-grants, as well as for procuring any equipment that is required as part of an Egyptian-U.S. partnership. (Note: No more than $1 million can be spent on equipment that has a useful life of one year or more.)

Objective 2: Promoting Research, Development, and Innovation (RDI) in national priority development areas

Education and innovation are at the heart of long-term economic growth and will be critical to Egypt's ability to acquire and sustain a competitive advantage in a global knowledge-based economy. Institutions of higher education form the bedrock of knowledge-based economies. Universities often serve as incubators for new ideas. Given the private sector's interest in increasing its global competitiveness and employing qualified labor, there is a critical need for increased collaboration between the private sector and universities.

Investments in science, technology and engineering have fueled the world's most powerful economies and continue to transform the way we live, interact with one another, and do business. Egypt faces daunting development challenges that will require drastic changes in patterns of production and consumption, and innovative ways of developing better crops, disposing of solid waste, delivering clean sources of energy and water and creating living areas for a soaring population. Science will be indispensable to understanding these problems, and innovative technologies will be central to resolving them.

However, scientific researchers in Egypt are hampered by a lack of policy and organizational infrastructure to support the transfer of innovations from the university laboratory into the entrepreneurial realm. The development of legal frameworks, linkages to private sector investors, and the promotion of an academic culture that connects theoretical research to real-life applications to solve development problems will provide a platform for scientists to take their innovations to market.

Objective 2 will therefore support the creativity and catalyze the innovation required of a modern economy. The goal is to bring together U.S. and Egyptian higher education institutions with private partners committed to innovation, knowledge production, and economic growth to address strategic challenges vital to Egypt's sustainable development and economic prosperity.   The Program will leverage significant resources from the private sector and other stakeholders to maximize the potential of this objective. It will concentrate on areas of university research that are most beneficial to the future development of Egypt. The RDI partnerships will provide additional funding that will slowly increase Egypt's overall expenditures

on RDI with the goal of strengthening the link between university RDI and industry and enhancing the participation of higher education research institutions in the U.S. university research areas. The education, training and development of university staff and young masters, doctoral and post-doctoral student for the RDI system are very critical to the continued growth and strengthening of the higher education system and crucial to Egypt's economic development. At present the separation of public research institutions from the university and the lack of strong links and co-operation between the two hinders the ability of universities to effectively provide training for adequate number of staff and student because most of the physical infrastructure for RDI now exists outside the universities in institutions such as the National Research Center, and the Agricultural Research Center. Providing incentives for RDI initiatives in universities for faculty members to engage in RDI initiatives and attractive rewards for publishing the outcomes of their initiatives will increase output of RDI in Egypt and contribute to economic growth.

This objective will complement the U.S.- Egypt Joint Science and Technology Fund which is a long term engagement in science and technology that has over the past 18 years provided high-impact scientific research carried out between U.S. and Egyptian public and private sector institutions through the Ministry of Scientific Research. The RDI system in Egypt is led by the Science and Technology Competitive Fund (STCF), which funds research in various public sector ministries such as the Ministries of Industry & Trade, Petroleum & Minerals, Electricity and Energy, Transportation, Health, or Social Affairs.

Outcome 2.1: Establishing Sustainable Private Sector Linkages with Egyptian Universities
Project sustainability relies on three key factors:
1) government leadership (both at the universities and by the MOHE) is essential if RDI is to thrive at individual universities and spread throughout the higher education system;
2) the ability of each partnership to raise revenues and make alliances with stakeholders is the best indication of their relevance and, thus, an essential aspect of the project's sustainability; and
3) ability to form enduring partnerships with world class U.S. universities outside of Egypt to globalize education, exchange ideas, collaborate on research and raise standards.

The engagement of the private sector with universities to yield sustainable partnerships between researchers in Egypt and the United States could significantly contribute towards Egypt's economic revival by (a) stimulating local economies through the creation of new high growth companies that provide job opportunities for university and technical college graduates; (b) forming high value partnerships to produce innovative goods and services for national, regional and global markets; and (c) fostering technological innovation and commercialization on university campuses. For example, the establishment of creative workshop spaces (modeled after USAID Development Labs, Design Labs and Fab Labs) on Egyptian campuses could support the development of solutions and prototypes by students, faculty and the community. Additionally, fellowships for Egyptian researchers to link with specialized U.S. programs could further develop early stage technologies and social enterprises, with the ultimate goal of improving Egypt's innovation and technology commercialization capabilities. As confidence builds in the contributions of RDI to industry profitability, and as universities learn how to better market their programs and research to industries and foundations, USAID expects the costs of the advanced research to shift to the business community and foundations.

Outcome 2.1 Expected Results

- New partnerships formed that link tertiary institutions to the private sector to solve Egypt's development challenges.
- Public private partnerships and/or global development alliances established.
- Increased number of research projects funded with at least 50% private sector funding.
- Increased number of projects that result in commercialized products.

Outcome 2.2: Establishing Interdisciplinary RDI (Research, Development, and Innovation) Hubs and Networks, and Retention of Top Egyptian Talent in RDI.
Partnerships developed under this component might establish outcome-oriented "RDI hubs" that will develop new concepts, methods, technologies, or ways to analyze data that will substantially advance the state of the art in strategic areas through multidisciplinary research teams, which must include the private sector. Students and staff will gain exposure to how research can be pursued in an entrepreneurial way to solve practical problems with potential commercial spinoffs.

Such RDI partnerships will elevate Egyptian research and development enterprise to a world class level. These RDI networks will pool scientific and technical resources together to address shared global challenges, increase industrial competitiveness and inform policy. Focus areas will be designed in close collaboration with the private sector, higher education institutes and other stakeholders like the GOE and civil society.

USAID expects this component to yield sustainable partnerships with researchers in Egypt and the United States; new approaches for linking tertiary institutions to the private sector to solve development challenges and enhance industrial competitiveness; increased participation of students and faculty in international research that tackles future scientific and technological challenges; and evidence-based policy and decision making.

The education, training, and development of human capital for the RDI system are critical to the continued growth and vitality of the system, and investment in improving the stock and quality of that capital is crucial to Egypt's economic development. The curriculum reform process should include emphasis on the promotion of teaching techniques that promote critical thinking. This component emphasizes extensive short-term study and exchange programs for professors and students, as well as scholarships and internship opportunities. RDI partnerships will produce a critical mass of highly skilled professional scientists and engineers. Returned scholarship recipients are expected to increase the research capacity of Egyptian universities as well as contribute to improved instruction.

Instructors and students may have the opportunity to attend U.S. universities for a semester or shorter period. Training will be predominantly for graduate level students and post-graduate, non-degree training in needed RDI areas. Most importantly, training will be geared to create employable graduates with the skills needed for Egypt's private as well as public sectors. In order to incentivize the proper staffing of these RDI partnerships, an "Emerging Scientist Fund" or other competitive start up package could be used to support high-risk, high reward transformative research ideas. Such a fund could help to recruit young university researchers who have studied abroad, retain local talent and also support the professional development of women researchers. The RDI partnerships and network of industry/private sector linkages at Egyptian universities can also act as platforms that bring prominent U.S. scientists, engineers and

entrepreneurs to Egypt for short-or long-term stays. The RDI partnerships will reach out to the business community and relevant GOE entities to ensure relevant training programs are developed.

Outcome 2.2 Expected Results
- The establishment of private sector-university RDI hubs that address Egypt's priority development areas based on standards defined in consultation with the HEPP advisory committee.
- Creation of sustainable partnerships between researchers in Egypt and the United States.
- Enhanced industrial competitiveness.
- Increased participation of students and faculty in international research focused on scientific and technological challenges and evidence-based policy and decision-making.
- New jobs created or products or services developed including patents or copyrights for the work done and outputs produced from the research partnership.

Like Objective 1, this objective will be implemented primarily through partnership sub-grants to be awarded to U.S. and Egyptian higher education institutions. The successful Applicant will be responsible for awarding these sub-grants, as well as for procuring any equipment that is required as part of an Egyptian-U.S. partnership. (Note: No more than $1 million can be spent on equipment that has a useful life of one year or more.)

Needs Assessment for Construction Activities to Support Partnerships: One potential obstacle to achieving the results anticipated under Objectives 1 and 2 may be the state of the physical infrastructure and facilities of some of the participating Egyptian institutions. Accordingly, the Recipient must conduct a needs assessment of potential minor and limited construction projects[4] for the benefit of participating Egyptian institutions that would further the overall objectives of the HEPP. It is expected that such needs assessment will be used to inform a separate solicitation, managed by USAID, for the actual implementation of construction projects. The HEPP Recipient will be expected to perform its tasks under this award in coordination and cooperation with the construction contractor to ensure that any construction projects are appropriately aligned with, and address the needs of, the university partnerships. No construction activities will be directly implemented under the HEPP.

Training and Technical Assistance Activities

Objective 3: Improving Institutional Governance and Management of the Egyptian Higher Education System through Targeted Activities

This objective will not be implemented through partnership sub-grants. Rather, the results under Objective 3 will be achieved through the direct provision of technical assistance and training in select areas.

Compared internationally, Egypt's higher education institutions have extraordinarily limited discretion and little incentive for performance improvement and responsiveness to student demand and labor market

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[4] "Construction" for purposes of this NFO means: construction, alteration, or repair (including dredging and excavation) of buildings, structures, or other real property and includes, without limitation, improvements, renovation, alteration and refurbishment. The term includes, without limitation, roads, power plants, buildings, bridges, water treatment facilities, and vertical structures.

needs. For Egypt to achieve regional and global competitiveness, it will need to develop a long-term strategy to increase the quality of its human resources and its capacity for research and innovation. Technical assistance and capacity-building directed at the highest levels of the Ministry of Higher Education and the Supreme Councils of Universities (Public and Private) will support critical reform issues in the higher education sector, addressing both the university and the technical college systems. Support for policy reform will only be successful to the extent that the GOE initiates, leads, and is committed to the reforms.   Thus, it will be critical for the program implementer to engage closely with the MOHE, Supreme Council of Universities, and the relevant authorities overseeing technical colleges, to determine the highest priority reform areas across the university and technical college systems, and to develop activities to address those reforms as directed by USAID.

In order to ensure the sustainability of improvements brought about under partnerships, and to enhance the management and governance of individual higher education institutions, the Program will support a capacity-building and training program targeting Ministry officials, and university, department-level, and technical college administrators, to include both Egypt-based training and short-term exchanges.   At present, most Egyptian universities provide management training to professors moving into management positions. However, professors complain that many of these courses do not provide them with the skills required in their new positions. Under this Program, the Recipient will identify programs that could strengthen the management and governance skills of university and technical college faculty and staff.

There is considerable debate about how women and men fare differentially in university and technical college settings. While female enrollment may have surpassed male enrollment, and women serve as deans of several university faculty, none of the current public university presidents are women. Additional data collection and analysis is required to enable stakeholders to better understand current gender dynamics and develop programs to address any significant imbalances. If the data suggests that women are underrepresented at the highest levels of university and technical college leadership, activities to support the advancement of women must be designed and supported.

The following stakeholders will be critical in achieving targeted improvements to the system: (1) deans, department chairs and faculty members from universities, research centers, and technical colleges in Egypt; (2) high level officials from the Ministries of Higher Education and Scientific Research; and (3) decision-makers from the Supreme Council of Universities and the National Council for Education and Scientific Research. The Ministry of Industry and Foreign Trade may also be a relevant stakeholder in terms of informing the higher education sector regarding the type of skills and labor required by the Egyptian economy.

USAID recognizes that the needs for capacity-building at universities and technical colleges far outstrip the resources available under this Program, and that not all higher education institutions and departments throughout Egypt can be supported. There is a trade-off between the depth and breadth of support that can be provided. Applicants are encouraged to propose an approach that will have sufficient depth to result in sustainable, replicable improvements and capacity development while not crowding out the principal purpose of the Program which is the partnerships. Use of the Human and Institutional Capacity Development (HICD) methodology (see HICD Handbook in Attachment C) is one approach to the provision of capacity-building that can be considered.

Outcome 3.1: Policy frameworks for the effective governance of higher education institutions
Senior leaders at the Supreme Council for Universities and the Ministry of Higher Education recognize that critical reforms are needed in order to improve the quality of higher education in Egypt. Technical assistance and training are requested to support them in developing a national higher education strategy and in achieving the following results.

Outcome 3.1 Expected Results:
- Policy frameworks that promote increased autonomy and responsiveness of higher education institutions while ensuring and improving the overall quality of education. Possible new policy frameworks would:
    - provide a more equitable, strategic, and sustainable financial system for higher education;
    - enhance university and technical college autonomy to better respond to changes in student and market demands while increasing university accountability;
    - develop merit-based promotion systems to improve the quality of instruction and research;
    - integrate modern trends in online education and multi-disciplinary areas of study;
    - provide a structure for technical college representation at the national level, along with sufficient funding to support programs appropriately;
    - establish legal frameworks that would allow commercial spinoffs from innovations developed through research conducted at universities;
    - manage technology, intellectual capital and patents to encourage and promote innovation; and
    - create a supply of graduates from university and technical colleges with skills more suitable to the existing job market.

Outcome 3.2: A cadre of professionals with the ability to lead accountable and effective institutions of higher education
This component aims to improve institutional leadership by building human capacity for institutional self-management and reform. Higher education leaders from universities, technical colleges, and the GOE will benefit from professional development opportunities that will strengthen the management and governance of higher education institutions.

Outcome 3.2 Expected Results:
- Improved governance and management of Egyptian higher education institutions.
- University and technical college leaders that possess the skills needed to engage more purposefully with their communities and manage their institutions more cost-effectively; and
- A specific result related to women's leadership will be developed after analysis more clearly identifies where disparities exist.

Applicants may include additional expected results in their applications that reflect the capacity-building strategy they propose.

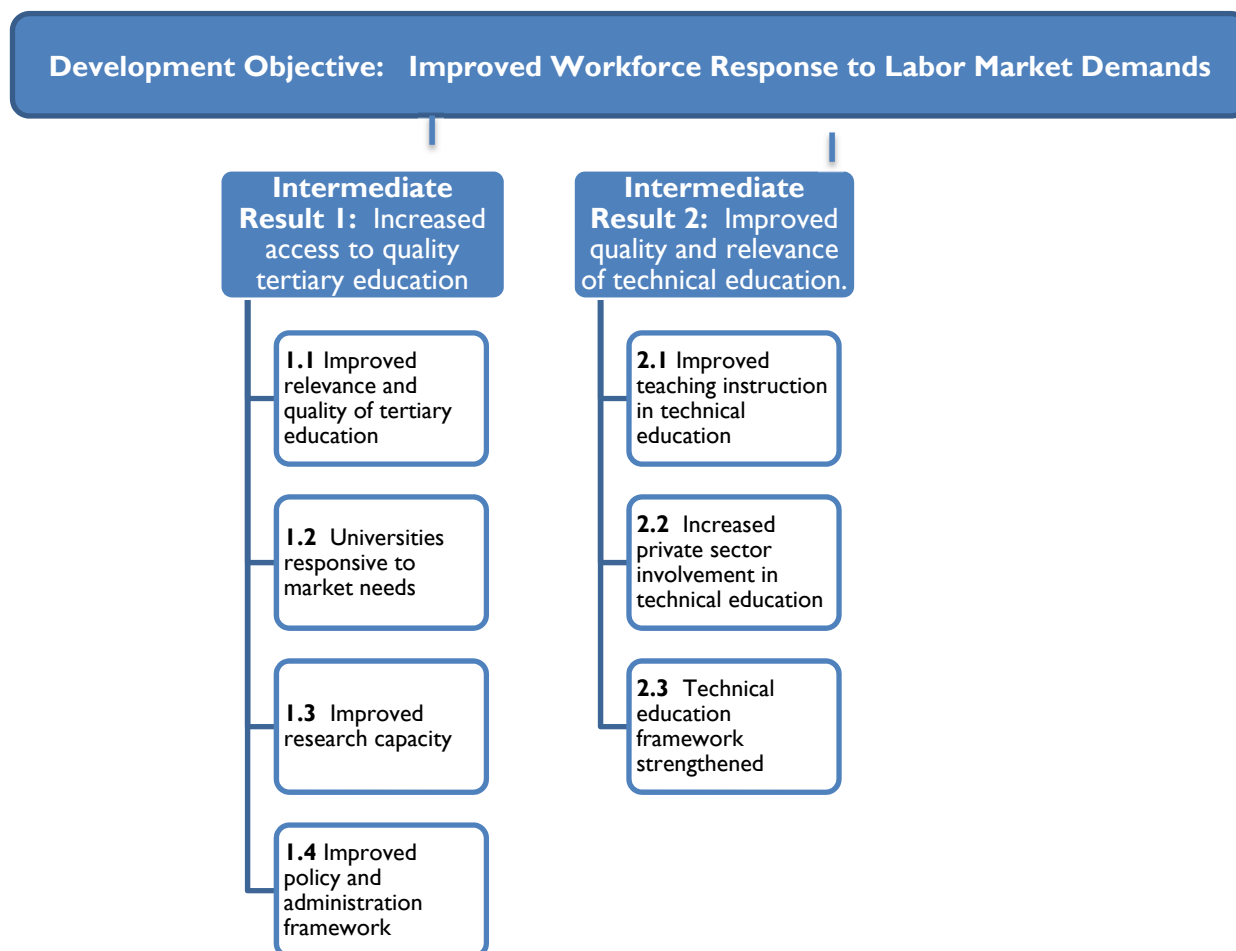**I.F.   Considerations for Sustainability**

Program sustainability relies on a host of factors, some of which are not under the control of the implementer. USAID anticipates that the following key factors will need to be considered:

1) Government leadership (both at public universities and technical colleges) is essential for new programs and reforms to take hold and endure at Egyptian universities and technical colleges;
2) The ability of partnership institutions to raise revenues and create alliances with stakeholders is a good indication of the Program's relevance and, thus, an essential aspect of the project's sustainability;
3) Enduring partnerships with top-notch universities outside of Egypt (in this case U.S. universities) to globalize education, exchange ideas, collaborate on research and raise standards; and
4) Early attention must be paid to investment and pursuing future streams of financial support, whether consideration of fees or tuition and/or private sector support.

I.G.	**Higher Education Partnerships Program Results Framework**

Within USAID/Egypt's goal of tangibly improving the lives of ordinary Egyptians during a period of transition, the Office of Education has a focused development objective on improving the response of the workforce to labor market demands through focused improvements in the tertiary education system.

The Higher Education Results Framework that addresses this development objective includes:

Development Objective: Improved Workforce Response to Labor Market Demands

Intermediate Result 1: Increased access to quality tertiary education

Intermediate Result 2: Improved quality and relevance of technical education.

1.1 Improved relevance and quality of tertiary education

1.2 Universities responsive to market needs

1.3 Improved research capacity

1.4 Improved policy and administration framework

2.1 Improved teaching instruction in technical education

2.2 Increased private sector involvement in technical education

2.3 Technical education framework strengthened

The Higher Education Partnerships Program will contribute to the overall objective through achievements in each of the three intermediate results, though not necessarily in equal parts. Please see Attachment B for the standard and mission-defined custom indicators associated with these results, and a table detailing the relationship between HEPP objectives and outcomes and the results framework.

I.H   Branding and Marking Plan

The successful Applicant, within 60 days, will be required to submit a Branding Strategy and Marking Plan to be evaluated and approved by the Agreement Officer, the AOR, and the Development Outreach and Communications Specialist. The Branding and Marking Plan must be in accordance with USAID policy directives and required procedures found in ADS 320 (http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/320) and 22 CFR 226 (http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pcaab391.pdf) (or any successor provision(s)). The marking plan should address specific communications mechanisms the recipient organization will use to inform the public about the USAID-funded program. Successful Applicants must comply with the requirements of the USAID Graphic Standards Manual (http://www.usaid.gov/branding).

I.I.   Monitoring and Evaluation

Applicants must include an illustrative monitoring and evaluation plan as part of their Technical Application that includes output and outcome level indicators including the standard indicators listed in the Higher Education Results Framework in Attachment B. Applicants may also suggest custom indicators that would be finalized after the award is made. The illustrative M&E plan shall include indicators for each expected result as appropriate, and a realistic approach for collecting analyzing, tracking, and reporting quality data.

Illustrative Activity Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

For purposes of the solicitation, an illustrative Activity M&E Plan is required and may be submitted as an Annex to the Technical Application. The illustrative Activity M&E Plan should include indicators and annual targets for basic project outputs (number of partnerships established, number of internships provided, etc.), but must also include higher level outcome and impact indicators for measuring quality improvement according to the Results Framework in Section I.G., and detailed in Attachment B. At this time, it may be difficult to set baselines and targets for the higher level indicators, but the illustrative Activity M&E Plan must include a clear and realistic explanation of how outcome and impact performance indicators and baselines of USAID/Egypt Higher Education partnerships will be measured and analyzed and how subsequent performance targets will be established and measured.

Examples of outcome indicators include:
- Percentage of graduates from USG-supported tertiary education programs reporting themselves as employed;
- Number of dual/joint degree programs established at Egyptian tertiary institutions;
- Number of academic research initiatives from which findings have been replicated, applied, or taken to market.

A Final M&E Plan meeting the requirements below will be due within 90 days of award.

Final Project M&E Plan

The Final Activity M&E Plan is a management tool that enables the Applicant and USAID to monitor the progress of HEPP Program activities towards achieving the stated deliverables and objectives. After the award is made, the Recipient will work in consultation with the AOR and other USAID/Egypt staff to develop and execute the final Activity M&E Plan. This final plan will be completed within 90 days of award and must include specific indicators including the standard and custom indicators detailed in Attachment B as well as custom indicators proposed by the Applicant; and baseline data, targets, and data collection methods for each result, indicator, and deliverable.   The Final Activity M&E Plan will be based on a USG fiscal year calendar and must include the following elements:

- List of key project objectives, expected results and project outputs (output is a count of services delivered or items produced) as well as a brief description of the linkages between the project's outputs and its expected results; and
- Definition and detailed description of the performance indicators to be tracked including unit of measure; data source; justification/management utility; baseline values; annual targets; annual actual data; frequency and schedule for data collection; individual responsibility for data collection and availability of data at USAID; and detailed plans for data analysis, review and reporting.

The Recipient is encouraged to propose other indicators that will assist in managing project performance using the results framework in Attachment B as a guideline.

Ninety days after award, the Recipient shall submit the final revised Activity M&E Plan to USAID together with the Annual Work Plan.

The Recipient and USAID will agree upon the final choice of performance indicators useful for timely management decisions and credibly reflecting the actual performance of the project. Activity M&E Plan data must meet reasonable quality criteria of validity, reliability, timeliness, precision and integrity, and be disaggregated by gender as appropriate and feasible.

Expected results for the Higher Education Partnerships Program are noted under the detailed description of each task, but the Recipient must set more refined targets during the mobilization period while implementing the Work Plan, subject to USAID review and approval.

USAID will annually verify and validate all data reported by the Recipient. USAID will conduct formal data quality assessment every three years for selected indicators. The Recipient must maintain data and supporting documentation that can be accessed for verification and validation purposes.

The structure of the Final Activity M&E Plan must link with the USAID/Egypt Office of Education's Project M&E Plan and the Mission's Performance Management Plan (PMP), and should use the USAID PMP template to ensure alignment with Mission M&E and performance monitoring systems.

Evaluation
USAID will conduct project evaluations as deemed necessary. The following type of evaluation may be conducted in the course of the project.

A **performance evaluation** is usually planned to examine what the Program has achieved (as deemed by the AOR either at an intermediate point in execution or at the conclusion of an implementing period); how the Program is being implemented; how it is perceived and valued; whether expected results are occurring; and other questions that are pertinent to program design, management and operational decision making. Such an evaluation also recommends any activity modifications needed to improve performance, and also will incorporate a before-after intervention comparison.

The Recipient, after consulting with and obtaining approval from the AOR, must ensure appropriate baseline data availability or gathering, periodic monitoring, adequate performance reporting, and other activities to facilitate the implementation of evaluations. The Recipient must ensure that baseline data are collected early in the life of the grant, before any significant implementation has occurred. Baseline data collection must be designed based on a plan for the analysis of the data.

USAID/Egypt intends to engage a monitoring and evaluation contractor responsible for monitoring control groups and conducting mid-term and final evaluations. However, since the HEPP activity is likely to start before such a monitoring and evaluation instrument is in place, Recipients will be expected to define how they will establish comparison groups that will enable USAID to assess the impact of the HEPP on beneficiaries versus non-beneficiaries. The Recipient will need to closely coordinate and be available to provide information to the evaluation contractor as it undertakes this work.

The Recipient must also collect and monitor gender-related outputs and results in all aspects of programming, including analysis of gender disaggregated indicators for all people to identify gaps and unexpected results. Without gender-disaggregated data, neither USAID nor the Recipient will be in a position to identify gaps, lessons learned, or unexpected results that could be used to make changes needed in the Program. Promoting gender equality and advancing the status of all women and girls around the world are important U.S. foreign policy and development objectives.

I.J.   Cost Sharing

Cost sharing is an important element of the USAID-Recipient relationship. In addition to USAID funds, Applicants are required to contribute resources from their own, private, or local sources for the implementation of this project. For this Program, USAID/Egypt requires a minimum cost-share of 10% of the total project cost.

Cost sharing may consist of cash or in-kind contributions or any combinations thereof, subject to the following:

1) Cash and in-kind contributions will be accepted as part of the Applicant's cost sharing when such contributions are: (a) verifiable from the Applicant's records; (b) not included as contributions for any other federally-assisted program; (c) reasonable for the accomplishment of partnership objectives; and (d) not paid by the federal government under another grant.
2) In-kind contributions may include, but are not limited to: waivers of tuition and fees for students participating in academic exchanges; donation of library and classroom materials to the partner; Information Communication Technology infrastructure and Internet Service Provider subscription subsidy for the partner and exchange students; faculty salaries; travel and/or per diem for faculty

and administrators to participate in professional exchange and development programs; and non-recovery of indirect costs.

Cost sharing is defined at 22 CFR 226.23 (or any successor provision(s)).

I.K.   Areas of USAID Substantial Involvement

USAID anticipates a strong and close working relationship with the Recipient, as well as with the U.S. partner universities and the Egyptian universities, technical colleges, and the Ministry of Higher Education. The Agreement Officer Representative (AOR) will serve as the primary contact between USAID and the award Recipient. USAID will be substantially involved (active involvement by USAID in certain programmatic elements during implementation of the activity) in the following areas:

1) approval of the Recipient's implementation/work plan and PMP by the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR);

2) approval of specified key personnel by the Agreement Officer following technical concurrence of the AOR;

3) approval of all sub-awards by the Agreement Officer following technical concurrence of the AOR;

4) engaging with the HEPP Advisory Committee on matters of policy;

5) review of the Recipient's advertisements to solicit U.S. partner universities and colleges for Egyptian universities and technical colleges, including substantive technical/programmatic aspects of the advertisements;

6) collaborative involvement with MOHE and Egyptian universities and technical colleges in the selection of U.S. partner universities and concurrence of the sub-award Recipients and the substantive technical/programmatic provisions of the sub-awards;

7) approval of a program monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan (to the extent that such information is not included in the application) by the AOR;

8) USAID monitoring (by USAID staff) to permit direction or redirection because of the interrelationships with other projects and partners.

Coordination

The Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) will be responsible for oversight and technical direction of the project, both in writing and verbally. Project personnel will be expected to meet regularly (via conference call or in person) with the AOR or his/her designee to review the status of activities, and must be prepared to make periodic, unplanned oral and written briefings to USAID/Egypt and U.S. Embassy/Cairo staff, as appropriate.

The Recipient will ensure that U.S. procurement rules are followed for any purchases considered necessary for the Program to include solicitation, transport, installation, and customs clearance as required. Applicants will discuss how this procurement will be undertaken in the management plan their application.

Personnel Requirements

The Applicant must propose to recruit and maintain a team of technical experts and supporting staff to implement the Program described in this program description and manage its range of activities and services. This may include staffing arrangements that are necessary to achieve the desired results. USAID considers collaboration with the recipient crucial for the successful implementation of the Program. To that end, Applicants must discuss any personnel or institutional resources, they deem necessary to manage the Program effectively.

Applicants shall propose technical personnel and other personnel, as deemed appropriate, to implement the major tasks above. The Key Personnel listed below are considered essential to the work being performed due to their skills and position within the HEPP project implementation team. Once included in a signed award, Key Personnel may not be replaced by the Recipient without the written approval of the Agreement Officer. The Recipient must recruit and establish a team of experts and supporting staff to develop and implement the project and to manage its central and local elements including short-term consulting and coordination with other partners in the project.

Chief of Party
The Chief of Party is responsible for the overall leadership, management and implementation of the Program and report directly to the designated USAID Agreements Officer's Representative (AOR). S/he must supervise project implementation, serve as the principle interlocutor with USAID and the GOE, and ensure the project meets stated goals and reporting requirements. The Chief of Party must meet the following minimum set of qualifications:
- the Chief of Party shall have a master's degree (Ph.D. preferred) in Public Policy, Higher Education, Administration, International Development or a relevant field from an internationally recognized university;
- a minimum of ten years of professional experience in the successful implementation of higher education and/or human and institutional capacity development programs;
- a minimum of five years of international experience leading capacity development programs that involved collaborative design and implementation across multiple institutions; and
- proven leadership in the administration of similar sized international donor technical assistance projects, or universities and technical colleges with skills in strategic planning, management, supervision and budgeting.

Deputy Chief of Party
The Deputy Chief of Party must complement the strengths and responsibilities of the Chief of Party. The Deputy Chief of Party is responsible for day-to-day project management, including management of staff, activities and sub-awards and oversight of monitoring, evaluation and reporting. The Deputy Chief of Party must meet the following minimum set of qualifications:
- a master's degree in a relevant field from an internationally recognized university;
- a minimum of 7 years of progressively more responsible experience managing higher education and/or human and institutional capacity development projects;
- significant contract and grants management experience; and
- ability to participate in all representation and technical meetings in English.

Note: USAID requires that between the above two positions the following skills/experience are present:
- significant experience in university/higher education administration;
- thorough knowledge of Egypt; and
- fluency in Arabic.

Finance and Grants Manager

The Finance and Grants Manager provides overall technical and administrative leadership in the areas of Financial Management and Grants Management for HEPP. General responsibilities will include accounts payable, cost allocation, quarterly reporting, payroll, budget preparation, subcontract/grants management, and tracking support. In addition, the Manager will be responsible for setting up the HEPP grants manuals, policies, procedures, performance score cards and reporting systems and requirements that are compliant with USAID grants management regulations. The Finance and Grants Manager must meet the following minimum set of qualifications:
- a minimum of seven years of experience in Financial Management and post-graduate qualifications in Finance, Business Administration, Management, or Accounting; and
- experience with international development programs and actors.

Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Advisor is responsible for coordinating the development of a performance management plan for the project, including performance monitoring criteria. The M&E Advisor must meet the following minimum set of qualifications:
- a master's degree from an accredited, well-renowned university in a relevant field;
- a minimum of seven years of monitoring and evaluation experience using large donor systems and templates with at least three of these years of experience preferably on higher education programs; and
- strong M&E skills, data analysis and report writing skills required.

Other Required Principal Project Personnel

Applicants have the discretion to determine the proper number and mix of additional personnel including other long-term permanent staff, consultants, personnel from local organizations, short-term technical staff, and others to meet project requirements, and to describe them in the technical Application. If Applicants propose technical leads for particular areas, USAID/Egypt strongly encourages that they consider locally (non-overseas)-hired technical leads for some or all positions. All personnel must demonstrate exceptional written and oral communication skills in English and have an excellent command of the technical area. Familiarity with the political, social, economic and cultural context of working in Egypt is also necessary. The CVs and biographical sketches of any additional identified personnel may be provided in the Annex.

Approval of Annual Work Plan and Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

The Annual Work Plan, and the Final Monitoring and Evaluation Plan will specifically include USAID/Egypt's participation in the development and refinement of recruitment and selection procedures, including announcements of partnership solicitation, and approval of partnership awards, including the timing

associated with these processes. Draft annual work plans must be submitted sixty days before the start of the fiscal year and must include detailed budget reports for the fiscal year then ending.

As noted above, in respect to monitoring and evaluation, USAID requires regular process and output monitoring as well as an eventual analysis against a control group.

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SECTION II – AWARD INFORMATIOM

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II.A. Estimated Funds to be Available:

A total of up to $57 million is available for this Program, subject to the availability of funds. Funds provided to U.S. universities must be for the purposes of strengthening Egyptian universities and technical colleges. It is expected that the Recipient will give separate sub-awards to each lead U.S. and Egyptian higher education institution involved in an individual partnership. At least half of the sub-awards must go directly to Egyptian higher education institutions. The following table provides illustrative guidance regarding the distribution of funding among objectives and types of institutions.

Possible Allocations

	Technical Colleges (20%-30%)	Universities (70%-80%)
Objective 1	70-80%	50-60%
Objective 2	0%	25-30%
Objective 3	20-30%	15-25%

Approximately $3 million will be made available through a separate solicitation to support necessary construction projects (including renovation or refurbishment, as noted above) that would further the goals and success of partnerships. As noted above, the HEPP Recipient will be expected to conduct a needs assessment regarding the construction or renovation needs of participating Egyptian institutions.

II.B. Performance Period:

The performance period for this Program is five years, to start from the date of award.

The award will be a cooperative agreement as USAID's desire to be substantially involved in the implementation of the selected program that is consistent with USAID policy contained in ADS Chapter 303 concerning non-governmental assistance activities: http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303.pdf

SECTION III – ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

USAID welcomes applications from a wide range of organizations with a strong interest in, or concern for higher education in Egypt. This would include but not be limited to universities, state and community colleges, private companies, think tanks, foundations, business associations, non-government organizations, and civil society organizations.

1) This RFA is issued to ensure that all interested and qualified organizations have a fair opportunity to submit applications for funding.

2) **Central Contractor Registration (CCR) and Universal Identifier:** All Applicants must be registered in CCR and have a DUNS number unless exempt under 2 CFR 25.110 to be eligible to apply under this RFA.

3) USAID will **not** accept applications from individuals. Foreign governments, state and local governments and USG departments and agencies may also not apply for USAID funding under this RFA. All Applicants must be legally recognized organizational entities under applicable law. The following types of organizations may apply for funding under this RFA:

   a. **Colleges and Universities:** Qualified U.S. and non-U.S. colleges and universities (including minority serving institutions, community colleges, and women's colleges) may apply for USAID funding under this RFA. USG and USAID regulations generally treat colleges and universities as NGOs, rather than governmental organizations; hence, both public and private colleges and universities are eligible. Consortia of colleges and universities or university associations are encouraged to apply. Non-U.S. colleges and universities in countries that are ineligible for assistance under the FAA or related appropriations acts are ineligible.

   b. **Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs):** Qualified U.S. and non-U.S. private non-profit organizations may apply for USAID funding under this RFA. Foreign government-owned parastatal organizations from countries that are ineligible for assistance under the FAA or related appropriations acts are ineligible.

   c. **For-Profit Organizations:** Qualified U.S. and non-U.S. private, for-profit organizations may apply for USAID funding under this RFA. Foreign government-owned parastatal organizations from countries that are ineligible for assistance under the FAA or related appropriations acts are ineligible. Potential for-profit Applicants must note that, pursuant to ADS 303.5(g) (or any successor provision(s) and 22 CFR 226.81 (or any successor provision(s)), the payment of fee/profit to the prime Recipient under grants and cooperative agreements is prohibited. However, if a prime Recipient has a contract for the acquisition of goods or services (i.e., if a buyer-seller relationship is created), fee/profit for the (sub)-contractor is authorized to be paid pursuant to that contract so long as the prime Recipient abides by the procurement standards set forth in 22 CFR 226.40 to 49 (or any successor provision(s)).

III.A.   Geographic Restrictions

Applicants, (including teaming partners and consortium members) regardless of entity type, may not be from a foreign policy restricted country, i.e., Cuba, Iran, North Korea and Syria.

III.B.   "Responsibility" of the Applicant

In order for an award to be made, the Agreement Officer must make an affirmative determination that the Applicant is "responsible," as discussed in ADS 303.9 (or any successor provision(s)). This means that the Applicant possesses, or has the ability to obtain, the necessary management and technical competence to conduct the proposed program, and must agree to practice mutually agreed-upon methods of accountability for funds and other assets provided or funded by USAID.

In the absence of an affirmative "responsibility" determination, an award ordinarily cannot be made. However, in rare cases, an award can be made with "special award conditions" (i.e., additional non-standard award requirements designed to minimize the risk presented to USAID of making an award to an NGO for which an affirmative determination of "responsibility" cannot be made), but only where it appears likely that the Applicant can correct the deficiencies in a reasonable period.

III.C.   Cost Sharing

In order to be considered for award, Applicants must contribute resources from own, private or local sources for the implementation of this Program. Contributions can be either cash or in-kind and can include contributions from the Applicant, other U.S. organizations, local counterpart organizations in Egypt, project partners, the private sector, and other donors (but not other USG funding sources). Applicants are strongly encouraged to provide innovative approaches to cost sharing and to provide detailed explanations in their applications and budget notes. As noted in Section I.J., USAID/Egypt requires a minimum cost-share of 10% of the total project cost for this Program.

SECTION IV – APPLICATION SUBMISSION INFORMATION

IV.A.   Instructions for the Preparation and Submission of Applications

Applicants are required to submit an electronic version of the technical Application and a separate electronic version of the cost proposal to OET@usaid.gov. The technical application must be appended to the award as the method of implementation of the program description. The budget and budget notes must be attached to the award as it will constitute the basis of the award summery budget.

1. Applications must be submitted in two separate parts: (a) Technical and (b) Cost or Business Application.

2. Technical applications must be written in the English language.

3. The cost/business application must be written in the English language - there is no limit on the number of pages for the cost/business application. The cost/business application is to be accompanied by SF-424 series, which includes:

- SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance
- SF-424A, Budget Information, Non-construction Programs
- SF-424B, Assurances, Non-construction Programs

These Standard Forms can be found under Attachment B. A link to these forms can also be found at: http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aapproved_standard_forms.jsp

4. **Closing Date and Time:** The application must be submitted via e-mail to OET@usaid.gov **no later than February 18th, 2015 05:00 pm (EST)**. The electronic file must be labeled as follows: "[organization name]: Technical Application; [organization name]: Cost/Business Application." The time stamp on the email received at the email address provided above serves as the official time of receipt. USAID bears no responsibility for transmission errors or delays. Late applications will not be considered.

5. All Questions regarding this RFA must be submitted in writing to **OET@usaid.gov** no later than **December 18th, 2015 05:00 pm (EST).**

Application Guidelines

The Application must be prepared according to the structural format set forth below. The Application must be submitted no later than the date and time indicated on the cover page of this RFA.

Technical Applications must be specific, complete, and concise. The Application must demonstrate the Applicant's capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the goals of this Program. The Application must take into account the technical evaluation criteria found in Section V.

Technical portions of the Application are to be submitted electronically ONLY. Applicants must retain for their records a copy of the Application and all enclosures which accompany their Application. Erasures or other changes must be initialed by the person signing the Application. To facilitate the competitive review of the Application, USAID will consider only Applications confirming to the format prescribed below.

The length of the Technical Application shall not exceed 30 pages, with 1.5 line-spaced pages and standard one inch margins. **Information submitted as part of the Technical Application over 30 pages will not be evaluated.** Applicants must use Calibri font, size 11 sized typeset. A page in the Application which contains a table, chart, graph, etc. not otherwise excluded below is subject to the 30-page limitation. The Application must be submitted electronically and the software must be compatible with Microsoft Office. The Appendices (which include the CVs of personnel and letters of commitment and other attachments) is excluded from the page limitation. All other parts of the Technical Application are included in the 30 page limit.

Applicants who include data that they do not want disclosed to the public for any purpose or used by the U.S. Government except for evaluation purposes, must:

1. Mark the title page with the following legend:

"This application includes data that shall not be disclosed outside the U.S. Government and shall not be duplicated, used, or disclosed – in whole or in part – for any purpose other than to evaluate this application. If, however, a grant is awarded to this Applicant as a result of – or in connection with – the submission of this data, the U.S. Government shall have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting grant. This restriction does not limit the U.S. Government's right to use information contained in this data if it is obtained from another source without restriction. The data subject to this restriction are contained in sheets."

 and

2. Mark each sheet of data the Applicant wishes to restrict with the following legend:

"Use or disclosure of data contained on this sheet is subject to the restrictions on the title page of this application."

The Application must include the following:

1. **Cover page:** The cover page shall not exceed one page (not included in the 30-page limit) and must include the following information:
   - Name and address of organization(s) involved in the proposed application with the lead or prime Applicant clearly identified
   - Type of institution
   - A description of how the institution meets the requirements under the definition in Section II - Eligibility Information
   - Lead and alternate point of contact for the Applicant (contact name, title or position with the institution/organization, address, telephone number, email address, and fax numbers)
   - Signature of authorized representative of the Applicant

2. **Table of Contents** (not included in the 30-page limit)

3. **Abbreviation list** (not included in the 30-page limit)

4. **Executive summary:** A maximum two-page (not included in the 30-page limit) brief description of proposed activities, goals, purposes, working relationships, method(s) of facilitation, and experience. Briefly describe technical and managerial resources of your institution/organization. Describe how the overall project will be managed.

5. **Technical Application** (limited to 30 pages – full guidelines below)

6. **Past performance information** (not included in the 30-page limit)**:** Applicants must include a list of the Applicant's (prime) and their implementing partners' contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements involving similar or related programs over the past three years, to include the location(s), name and current telephone number and/or e-mail address of at least one person knowledgeable of the Applicant's work on each such program, award numbers for each program (if available), and a brief description of the work performed.

It is recommended that the Applicant alert the contacts that their names have been submitted and that they are authorized to provide past performance information when requested. USAID reserves the right to obtain past performance information from other sources including those not named in the application. The technical evaluation team will review all applications and may engage the Applicant for clarifications or further information as needed.

Note: A past contract, grant, or cooperative agreement is not a prerequisite to apply. The application will not be affected, positively or negatively, simply by the fact that the Applicant has or has not been a prior Recipient of an award.

7. **List of key personnel including summary biographical information** (CVs, resumes and other documentation of personnel may be included in an appendix, not to be included in the 30-page limit.)

8. **Management structure/organizational chart** (not included in the 30-page limit)

9. **Letters of commitment** (not included in the 30-page limit)

10. **Gender considerations** (not to exceed one page, and not included in the 30-page limit)**:** The identification of specific gender equality and women's empowerment objectives in programming and project design is based on the findings of gender analysis, which is mandated by ADS 201.3.915.3.(a). Applicants must briefly describe how gender norms and constraints in the implementation context will affect the project and how the project is likely to reduce or exacerbate existing gender gaps. For instance, will men and women have equal access to participate in the project or activity? Will gender awareness training be necessary to ensure that husbands, families, and communities support women's participation in the project? The gender analysis must also identify potential adverse impacts and/or risks of gender-based exclusion that could result from planned activities, such as displacing women from access to resources or assets; increasing the unpaid work or caregiver burden of women relative to men; or increasing the risk of gender-based violence, including sexual exploitation or human trafficking, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS.

11. **Environmental requirements** (not to exceed one page, and not included in the 30-page limit)**:** The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, Section 117(c) requires that the impact of USAID's activities on the environment be considered and that USAID include environmental sustainability as a central consideration in designing and carrying out its development programs. This mandate is codified in 22 CFR 216 (Regulation 216) and in ADS 201.3.15.3(b) and 204, which, in relevant part, require that the potential environmental impacts of USAID-financed activities are identified prior to a final decision to proceed and that appropriate environmental safeguards are adopted for all activities. The Recipient's environmental compliance obligations under these regulations and procedures are specified in the following paragraphs of this RFA.

In addition, the Recipient must comply with host country environmental regulations unless otherwise directed in writing by USAID. In case of conflict between Egyptian and USAID regulations, the latter shall govern.

No activity funded under this cooperative agreement will be implemented unless an environmental threshold determination, as defined by 22 CFR 216, has been reached for that activity, as documented in a Request for Categorical Exclusion (RCE), Initial Environmental Examination (IEE), or Environmental Assessment (EA) duly signed by the Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO).

As part of its initial Work Plan, and all Annual Work Plans thereafter, the Recipient, in collaboration with the USAID AOR and Mission Environmental Officer or Bureau Environmental Officer, as appropriate, must review all ongoing and planned activities under this cooperative agreement to determine if they are within the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation.

If the Recipient plans any new activities outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation, it must prepare an amendment to the documentation for USAID review and approval. No such new activities may be undertaken prior to receiving written USAID approval of environmental documentation amendments.

Any ongoing activities found to be outside the scope of the approved Regulation 216 environmental documentation must be halted until an amendment to the documentation is submitted and written approval is received from USAID.

Applicants must indicate in their applications that they understand and will comply with these requirements.

IV.B.   Technical Application Guidelines:

The Technical Application is limited to 30 pages and must include the following sections:

1. Technical Approach
USAID requires the Applicant to be a facilitator in the implementation of the HEPP project. In the Technical Approach section of the narrative, Applicants must describe how they will work collaboratively with the partner higher education institutions to achieve the goal, objectives and outcomes identified for the Program. Applications must also describe anticipated activities and results of proposed partnership development activities and explain how these results will contribute to the Program's objectives. Although Applicants must respond to the program description outlined above, they are encouraged to draw from their expertise and knowledge to propose additional outputs and associated activities through which the program objectives and outcomes will be achieved. The Applicant's technical approach must detail, at a minimum, the following:

- How Applicant will conduct a competition among U.S. universities for selection of U.S. university partners;

- Process for administration of grants to Egyptian and American universities, including what benchmarks will be set and how;

- Process for determining if benchmarks have been met, and how grants will be monitored;

- Process to facilitate connections among participating universities and technical colleges and how Applicant will facilitate university networking with other Egyptian higher education institutions with similar technical programs;

- Process of oversight and monitoring and in what areas;

- How HEPP lessons learned, sector-relevant policy recommendations, and research findings will be disseminated;

- How Applicant will build the capacity of the MoHE, the Supreme Council of Universities and other higher education management entities as well as university and technical college administrations;

- How Applicant views the division of labor between the U.S. partner universities and the Applicant for technical support to the HEPP;

- How Applicant will facilitate a cohesive HEPP project that maintains an overall vision and approach, rather than disparate "HEPP Partnerships;" and

- How Applicant will ensure that the HEPP and the Agency's higher education priorities are closely matched with and fully integrated into the Agency's broader efforts with respect to establishing stronger relationships with the U.S. university community, key bureaus and offices, and USAID/Egypt.

Applicants must articulate a technical approach that encourages innovative and effective solutions to practical problems, including research proposals as well as effective ways to engage the private sector and solicit funding from the private sector, foundations and other legitimate non-GOE or non-donor sources.

USAID expects the activities, plans, outputs and outcomes of this project to be an integral part of Egyptian universities and the MOHE strategic plan for improving the institutional governance and management of the Egyptian higher education system and will have ownership of the project. Applicants must show how they intend to ensure that level of project ownership. Applications also must include a plan for sustainability that identifies strategies for and activities to support the goal and objectives of partnerships developed through the Program beyond the duration of partnership awards.

Finally, the program approach must identify factors outside of the institutions expected to be involved in partnerships that will help or hinder program implementation and describe plans to mitigate these factors when appropriate.

2. **Implementation Strategy**
The Applicant must include all factors it deems important for the project's success. The implementation strategy must discuss the Applicant's approach to carrying out proposed activities in a logical sequence of events that will allow the Program to progress toward producing required outputs over the life of the project.

Applicants must describe in some depth how they will divide responsibilities between the Applicant and the selected U.S. partner universities, as well as how collaboration among all entities, including USAID and MOHE, will be assured.

Applicants must plan to allocate adequate resources and time to monitoring and evaluation including performance management and assessment.

Work Plan: The implementation strategy must include a draft work plan that provides a proposed list of program activities and an implementation schedule. Applicants must provide a timeline, Gantt chart, or other graphic that depicts more detailed activities in Year One with the subsequent program years in sufficient detail to portray the Applicant's implementation goals and processes. This graphic may be submitted as an attachment, and will not count against the 30-page limit.

Organizational Capability and Management Plan: Applicants must provide a clear description of their internal capabilities/resources and relevant work experience/history to demonstrate the capacity to successfully manage the proposed project to include:

- An explanation of the core technical capacities/resources and institutional support that the Applicant offers and explain the Applicant's financial control system.
- A brief description of the Applicant's areas of expertise and particular capacities in implementing the requirements of this RFA.

The Applicant must describe the organizational capabilities and expertise of any proposed sub-Recipients, if applicable.

Mobilization and Quick Start Activities: The Applicant must fully mobilize personnel and offices in-country within 30 days of CA award. Applicants must identify quick start activities in the mobilization plan section of their application. The mobilization plan must include a Gantt chart. Activities in the mobilization plan must be high priority and can begin even while the work plan is being developed. Special attention must be given to the Labor Market Institutional Assessment noted below. Quick start activities may commence prior to work plan approval with written concurrence of the AOR. The following are examples of substantive quick start activities that could be undertaken immediately:

- Meetings with Ministry of Higher Education officials, Supreme Council of Universities, and Technical College Administrators for "self" assessment, strategic planning, and work planning purposes;

- Exploration of partnership opportunities in the priority sectors articulated by The Ministry of Higher Education (nursing, business, and law);

- Drafting of advertisement for U.S. and Egyptian university partners;

- National and regional forums and workshops to discuss issues related to the discussion of sector issues identified in the Labor Market and Institutional Assessment noted above, that bring together various stakeholders.

3. **Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy**

Applicants must clearly communicate how they will collect and analyze performance data, both quantitative and qualitative, through a systematic process of monitoring throughout the duration of the partnership. Applicants must describe how the M&E strategy will increase the capacity of the host-

country institution to utilize monitoring and evaluation data and processes to strengthen institutional management.

Applicants are expected to propose Program activities with defined milestones and targets to achieve all of the expected results described in the program description. USAID encourages Applicants to offer creative ideas as to how results can be better achieved, benefits can be increased and/or costs reduced by undertaking activities through linked or integrated approaches.

Illustrative Activity M&E Plan: Applicants must include a brief description of the illustrative Activity M&E Plan and their proposed approach for conducting the baseline assessment, a proposed schedule and the use of baseline data to refine partnership formation strategy and finalize targets, using the indicators included in the Results Framework described in Section I.G. and expanded upon in Attachment B. Applicants must also briefly describe how the Program will ensure a management process of critical reflection during which planned indicator targets will be compared and analyzed against actual indicator values. Applicants must describe how knowledge gained through monitoring and evaluation will be used for critical decision-making and course correction.

4. Expertise of Key Personnel (some elements not included in 30 page limit as noted below): Applicants must demonstrate their commitment to effectively manage the partnership and fulfill financial and programmatic compliance requirements. Key personnel are those personnel whose professional and technical skills are essential to the successful completion of the activities related to the partnership. Key personnel fill positions deemed essential for the successful implementation of the award and must have the relevant technical and managerial experience required for the position. Key personnel will be interacting with high level officials from MOHE as well as universities and technical colleges and must have appropriate credentials and experience for such relationships.

Applicants must identify and describe credentials and experience of Key personnel responsible for technical leadership including subject/regional expertise; administrative management, monitoring and evaluation; and financial management of the award:

- Describe each proposed key personnel member's role, technical expertise and estimated time (level of effort). In addition, list non-key personnel involved on a full or part-time basis and level of effort.
- Explain the staffing model and specify the composition and organizational structure.

To be included as attachments not counting toward the Technical Application 30-page limit:

- Curriculum vitae and other supporting documentation for proposed key personnel indicated in the application.
- Applicant may propose other "non-key" personnel positions if they choose. For each additional "non-key" personnel proposed, Applicant must provide a proposed short job description. Describe how the proposed staff meet required qualifications and provide a clear description of how the Program's goal, objectives and tasks will be met under the direction of these personnel.

5. **Approach to Planning an Equitable Budget**

Applicants must include a description of their approach to planning a cost-effective and equitable budget (full cost proposal to be submitted as a separate document submission) that reflects and describes the proposed partnership approach.

Applicants are encouraged to focus resources on benefiting Egyptian institutional partners. Applicants must budget at least half of sub-awards to go directly to Egyptian institutions.

Direct grants to partnering higher education institutions is at the heart of this Program and therefore Applicants must propose a methodology that minimizes the application of overhead costs to these sub-grants. The budget must allocate adequate financial resources for the strategic planning and design phase, including a baseline assessment; the implementation phase; and monitoring and evaluation activities. The budget proposed by Applicants for sub-awards will be considered illustrative, as it may change based on the outcome of the start-up phase.

IV.C. Cost/Business Application Format

The ceiling for this Cooperative Agreement is $57 million over the five- year implementation period, contingent on availability of funds.

Cost/business sections of the application must be separate from the technical section. There is no page limitation to the cost/business submittal.

The cost/business portion of the application must consist of the following completed forms and requests for information which are available on the following web-site http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303.pdf:

- SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance,
- SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-construction Programs, and
- SF-424B, Assurances – Non-construction Programs.
- Pre-Award Certifications, Assurances and Other Statements of the Applicant/Recipient as stated in ADS 303.3.8 (or any successor provision(s) and are available on the following web-site http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303.pdf.
- Other submission requirements for applications submitted in response to this RFA.

The following are amongst the Pre-Award Certifications, Assurances and Other Statements of the Applicant/Recipient which are requested to be included with the application submittal:

1. **Restrictions on Lobbying** (22 CFR 227);
2. **Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers** (ADS 206); and
3. **Certification Regarding Terrorist Funding** (AAPD 04-14).

b. Other certifications and statements found in <u>Certifications, Assurances, and Other Statements of the Recipient</u>:

1. The **Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants**;

2. A Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number (See <u>Use of a Universal Identifier by Grant Applicants</u> for background information.)**;**

3. A signed copy of **Key Individual Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking,** (<u>ADS 206.3.10</u>) when applicable;

4. A signed copy of **Participant Certification Narcotics Offenses and Drug Trafficking** (<u>ADS 206.3.10</u>) when applicable.

Other submission requirements for applications submitted in response to this RFA consist of:

- Detailed/itemized budget in **excel format** with budget narrative in **MS word** for each budget object class category, including explanation of how costs were estimated, for both the requested USAID funding and proposed cost share amounts. More information on the detailed/itemized budget is provided further below in this same section.
- Similar budget detail with narrative is requested for organizational partners teaming with the prime Applicant.
- Current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) negotiated between the Applicant and a Federal agency (if available). If a NICRA is not available, the following is required: 1) Copies of the Applicant's financial reports for the previous 3-year period, which have been audited by a certified public accountant or other auditor satisfactory to USAID; 2) Projected budget, cash flow and organizational chart; 3) A copy of the organization's accounting manual.
- If program income (i.e., cost recovery or other revenues generated under the award) is anticipated, the estimated amount should be reflected in the budget, and the Budget Narrative should describe how the program income is proposed to be treated, i.e., additive, cost sharing, or deductive, or a combination thereof (See 22 CFR 226.24 (or any successor provision(s)).

<u>Detailed/Itemized budget</u>:

- For Local entities, if the Applicant proposes expending more than $300,000 of USAID funding during a single fiscal year of the Applicant, the Applicant must include funds within the budget to contract an audit. The average cost of an audit is approximately $10,000.

- The Applicant must submit the detailed budget in excel format including itemized costs breakdown, the necessary calculation formulas and due explanations. The budget and budget narrative must include the detailed breakdown of sub-awards costs. The budget must be broken down per year and by major category (e.g. personnel, fringe benefits, contractual, transport, other direct costs, indirect costs). The budget narrative must be submitted in MS Word format reflecting in detail rationales and details for each cost.

- The management structure must be clearly reflected in the budget and budget narrative. Levels of effort per month, number of months and the monthly remuneration must be clearly reflected for all personnel including key and admin/support staff. The Applicant must use the below format in the budget presentation for personnel costs. Salary history must be provided for every person irrespective of whether charged on USAID or cost-share. The salary history must be provided irrespective of whether the person worked during the past three years at the Applicant's organization or somewhere else, and irrespective of whether the person is key personnel or support.

- A similar table must be provided reflecting the proposed level of effort (LOE) under USP(6) and duration of this LOE, and LOE of the proposed personnel under other USPs and duration of the corresponding LOE.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
							Year 1			Year 2		
Position	Number of staff	Proposed Monthly Salary	Salary History: Provide Salary of this person during the past three years.	Number of months	% Level of Effort per Month	Total Amount per year	USAID Share	Cost Share	Total	USAID Share	Cost Share	Total
						=BxCxExF						

The budget submission must include a summarized Excel budget as following (edit line items as necessary to reflect the budget submission):

	Unit	Unit Name	Unit Cost	Number of Units	Year 1 – USAID	Year 1 – Cost Share	Total Year 1	Repeat for all	Total Years	Total USAID	Total Cost Share
Management Costs											

Personnel												
Fringe Benefits												
Travel												
Supplies & Equipment												
Sub-awards (if any)												
…												
Total												
Other Direct Project Costs												
…												
Total												
Indirect costs												
Grand Total												
…												
Percentage of USAID Management Costs of Total USAID Funding Requested												
Percentage of Other Direct Costs of Total USAID Funding Requested												
Percentage of Sub-awards (USAID share) of Total USAID Funding Requested												
Percentage of Cost Share of total Project Costs												

- The detailed breakdown of sub-awards should be presented in separate tabs.

The Applicant must submit as well a summary budget that, if approved, will constitute the basis of the award budget.

As per 22CFR226.25(f) (or any successor provision(s), USAID will restrict upon award the transfer of funds amongst direct cost categories, functions and activities in cases where such transfers exceed 10% of the total budget as last approved by the Agreement Officer.

SECTION V – APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA

V.A. General

USAID intends to award a single Cooperative Agreement as a result of this solicitation. The Government may reject any or all applications if such action is in the Government's interest. The Government may waive informalities and minor irregularities in applications received.

V.B. Review Criteria

The criteria presented below have been tailored to the requirements of this particular RFA. These criteria serve to: (a) identify the significant matters that Applicants must address in their applications and (b) set the standard against which all applications will be evaluated. The following are the Technical Application

Evaluation Criteria against which each Application will be evaluated. The order of importance of the categories of criteria is:

1. Technical Approach;
2. Management and Implementation Approach
3. Staffing Approach;
4. Cost-Effectiveness;
5. Past Performance.

The Technical Approach is significantly more important than the Management and Implementation Approach. The Management and Implementation Approach is more important than the Staffing Approach. The Staffing Approach is more important than Cost-Effectiveness. The Cost-Effectiveness is more important than the Past Performance. All non-cost factors, taken together, are significantly more important than cost.

Technical Approach

The Application will be evaluated on the extent to which it demonstrates the best plan for achievement of the HEPP's goals and objectives using the following sub-criteria, listed in order of importance.

- **Program Approach:** the extent to which the Applicant integrates an understanding of the current challenges and constraints in higher education in Egypt into an approach that best reflects and is likely to achieve the Program's goal, objectives, and expected outcomes as described in this RFA; and addresses the cross-cutting elements articulated in Section I.D.

- **Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** the extent to which the Application outlines an results-based Illustrative Activity M&E Plan that is thorough, clear, and feasible; correlates to the Work Plan provided in the Application; and is linked to the USAID Higher Education Results Framework described in Section I.G. and Attachment B.

- **Gender Considerations:** the extent to which the Application demonstrates an understanding of how gender constraints and norms in the implementation context will affect the program approach, as well as how the Program will address gender norms and empower women in the higher education sector. It will also be evaluated on the extent to which opportunities to enhance women's participation and leadership are incorporated into technical approach, implementation, benchmarks and targets, and monitoring and evaluation of indicators.

Management and Implementation Approach

The Application's approach to management and implementation will be evaluated using the following sub-criteria, listed in order of importance:

- The extent to which the Application describes an appropriate, realistic, clear, logical, and sustainable approach to supporting, facilitating, administratively managing, and monitoring the establishment of high impact partnership grants and the development and operation of the HEPP.

- The extent to which the Application optimizes the use of Egyptian higher education institutional systems in the implementation process; and proposes a process that will effectively nurture successful and balanced working relationships among Egyptian and U.S. higher education institutions, industry, government, and other HEPP stakeholders that can be sustained beyond the USAID funding period.

Staffing Approach

The Application's approach to staffing will be evaluated on the following sub-criteria, listed in order of importance:

- The extent to which the Key Personnel identified in the Application possess the required management and technical leadership experience requisite to provide vision, creativity, and interpersonal skills to work together with high level MOHE and higher education institution officials, professors, and instructors in a productive, respectful manner to fulfill the goals of this project, including appropriate academic credentials, ability to understand academia, government, and the private sector.

- The extent to which the staffing plan identifies and describes the roles of Key Personnel who will be responsible for technical implementation, monitoring and evaluation, administrative, and financial management of the Award.

Cost Effectiveness

Cost effectiveness will be evaluated based on the following sub-criteria, which have an equal level of importance:

- The extent to which the approach demonstrates cost-saving techniques and proposes effective approaches to cost share and resource leveraging, including from Egyptian and US universities, community colleges and technical colleges; and the private sector.

[Note: Applications that do not present realistic costs may risk not being considered for award.]

Past Performance

The application will be evaluated on the extent to which the Applicant's past performance indicates the potential for success in this project. The following factors will be taken into account, listed in order of importance:

- The Applicant's record of collaborating closely with various levels of developing country institutions and/or other public and/or private sector partners;
- The Applicant's prior experience with complex multi-sector programs, their creation, implementation, management, and monitoring and evaluation;
- The Applicant's institutional administrative and technical support that is available to the project; and

- The Applicant's prior experience and success in implementing, managing and evaluating similar activities.

Note:
A past contract, grant, or cooperative agreement is not a prerequisite to apply and scoring of the application will not be affected, positively or negatively, simply by the fact that the Applicant has or has not been a prior Recipient of an award.

USAID may use performance information obtained from sources other than those identified by the Applicant.

V.C.   Cost Evaluation

The cost application will be evaluated for cost effectiveness, cost realism and maximizing the use of cost share and the number of beneficiary students using USAID funding. Cost sharing contributions will be evaluated as well for cost effectiveness and realism. Applicants are encouraged to consider partnership arrangements that enhance the cost effectiveness of program implementation and provide other important benefits as well. Cost applications will be evaluated for innovative cost containment methods that minimize overall costs per student and maximize the number of students. A realistic commitment to cost share is generally viewed as enhancing the evaluated cost effectiveness of a program. Please note that cost share will be specifically tracked by USAID during program implementation to ensure compliance.

V.D.   Description of the Review and Selection Process

Application(s) which are deemed to offer the best overall value and meet USAID objectives will be selected for award. The Technical Evaluation Committee will evaluate the technical/programmatic merit of each application as measured against the evaluation factors. At the time of RFA issuance, all panel members are anticipated to be USAID employees. The panel may make an award recommendation based on the extent of its evaluation scope. In addition, one or more panel members may be asked to provide input to the cost effectiveness review, any substantial implementation involvement desired by USAID, and on any special provisions that may be included in the award.

Once an apparent successful Applicant is identified, additional information and discussion may occur between the Applicant and USAID Agreement Officer, before the Agreement Officer makes the final funding decision.

The recommendation or selection of an application for award does not in any way guarantee an award. The USAID Agreement Officer must be fully satisfied that the Applicant has the capacity to adequately perform in accordance with standards established by USAID and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). This issue of organizational capability is generally referred to as a pre-award "responsibility determination." The Agreement Officer must also complete any other necessary pre-award arrangements.

Details on USAID pre-award responsibility determination policy and procedure can be found on our agency website, in its automated directive system (ADS) chapter 303, section 303.3.9: http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303.pdf .

Other areas of review and discussion will vary according to the circumstances pertaining to the application. The following areas commonly require discussion and agreement prior to award:

1. Branding Strategy and Marking Plan. The apparent successful Applicant will be requested to propose a branding strategy and marking plan which provides for appropriate acknowledgment of USAID support, and which will be required as a material element of the Cooperative Agreement. Information on USAID branding and marking policy can be found in ADS Chapter 320. ADS Chapter 320 sections concerning "assistance" applies to this RFA.   ADS Chapter 320 sections concerning "acquisition" do not apply to this RFA. ADS Chapter 320 can be found on USAID website: http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/320.pdf .

2. Final program and budget plans.

3. Payment terms.

4. Procedures concerning administrative reporting and logistical requirements for program including training components.

5. Cost sharing terms.

6. Other award terms including audit, special provisions and/or special award conditions.

SECTION VI – AWARD ADMINISTRATION AND INFORMATION

VI.A.   Authority to Obligate the Government:

The USAID Agreement Officer is the only individual who may legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds. No costs chargeable to the proposed Cooperative Agreement may be incurred before receipt of either a fully executed Cooperative Agreement or specific pre-award written authorization from the Agreement Officer.

VI.B.   Authorized Geographic Code

The authorized geographic code for procurement of goods and services under this award is 937.

VI.C.   Available Funding and the Award

The total estimated budget for this Program is USD$57 million, for a period of five years from the date of signing of the award, pending availability of funds.

VI.D.   Anticipated Award Schedule

The period of performance for this Award is five years from the date of signing the agreement.

VI.E.   Duty Post

The duty post for this award is Cairo, Egypt. Travel may be required within Egypt or elsewhere. The Program will be housed in the Supreme Council Building or another government building to promote GOE capacity-building. The MOHE and Supreme Council of Universities (SCU) will provide staff to work closely with the Recipient so that when the Program ends, the GOE can continue the same kinds of work. This approach will also keep operating costs down.

VI.F.   USAID Disability Policy - Assistance (December 2004)

(a) The objectives of the USAID Disability Policy are (1) to enhance the attainment of United States foreign assistance program goals by promoting the participation and equalization of opportunities of individuals with disabilities in USAID policy, country and sector strategies, activity designs and implementation; (2) to increase awareness of issues of people with disabilities both within USAID programs and in host countries; (3) to engage other U.S. Government agencies, host country counterparts, governments, implementing organizations and other donors in fostering a climate of nondiscrimination against people with disabilities; and (4) to support international advocacy for people with disabilities. The full text of the policy paper can be found at the following website: http://pdf.dec.org/pdf_docs/PDABQ631.pdf.

(b) USAID therefore requires that the recipient not discriminate against people with disabilities in the implementation of USAID funded programs and that it make every effort to comply with the objectives of the USAID Disability Policy in performing the program under this grant or cooperative agreement. To that end and to the extent it can accomplish this goal within the scope of the program objectives, the recipient should demonstrate a comprehensive and consistent approach for including men, women and children with disabilities.

VI.G.   Deviations from Standard Provisions:

None are anticipated at this time.

VI.H.   Reporting Requirements

The following reports and related requirements will be included in the cooperative agreement issued as a result of this RFA: 1) Annual Work Plan; 2) Semi-Annual Technical and Financial Reports; 3) Annual Financial Reports; 4) Branding Strategy and Marking Plan; 5) Performance Monitoring Plan; and 6) Final Completion Report.   The Recipient is also expected to hire an external assessment team to prepare mid-term and final reports on program successes and lessons learned.

The Recipient is responsible to USAID for all matters related to the execution of the agreement. Specifically, the Recipient must report to the Agreement Officer, USAID/Egypt and to the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR), within the Office of Education and Training, USAID/Egypt, who will be designated by the Agreement Officer prior to award.

The Recipient must submit performance and financial reports to USAID/Egypt in compliance with the terms of the Cooperative Agreement, including, but not limited to:

Annual Work Plan

The Recipient must submit an annual work plan to the AOR that will detail the work to be accomplished during the upcoming implementation year of the Program. This work plan will be developed in partnership with the MOHE Unit(s) that are responsible for the design, implementation and monitoring of HEPP.

The scope and format of the first annual work plan must be finalized by the Recipient and approved by the AOR during the first 60 days after award. Annual work plans will generally run from October 1 – September 30. Draft work plans for subsequent years will be submitted no later than August 31.

The annual work plan may be revised on an occasional basis, as needed, to reflect changes on the ground based on MOHE request and with the concurrence of the AOR. The work plan is intended to be a working document for the use of the grantee, MOHE and USAID. The annual work plan must establish the timeline for objectives that indicate progress towards the tasks that must be performed to achieve objectives; and must specify activities on a critical path and show critical performance benchmarks for the responsible parties. The annual work plan must include a detailed budget with a pipeline analysis of costs incurred and projections of costs for the life of the agreement implementation plan for achieving project outputs.

Sub-Awards

USAID is committed to using local service providers to the greatest extent possible when implementing HEPP activities. To achieve this goal, as well as other competitive improvements outlined in the project components, the Recipient must submit a manual that details the operations of any program for sub-awards. The operations manual must detail the selection criteria and the process for allocating any sub-awards, management oversight and approval process, procurement procedures, and M&E mechanisms. The operations manual is due within 60 days following approval of the final first-year annual work plan and is subject to the approval of the Agreement Officer (AO).

Technical and Financial Reports

Reports must be submitted to the AOR within 30 days after the end of each USG fiscal year quarter. Specifically, three quarterly technical reports will be required within 30 days after the end of the first three quarters of the fiscal year, and one annual technical and financial report will be submitted to the AOR by October 30 each year. The scope and format of the reports will be determined in consultation with the AOR. The Annual Report will identify major accomplishments, results, and implementation challenges encountered.

Final Completion Report

The Recipient must prepare and submit to the AOR a Final Completion Report within 30 days after completion of the award. This report must summarize the accomplishments under the agreement, methods of work used, budget and disbursement activity, and recommendations regarding unfinished work

and/or program continuation. The Final Completion Report must also contain an index of all reports and information products produced under this agreement.

Recipient must submit one copy of a Final Completion Report to the USAID AOR and one copy to the Agreement Officer.

The Final Completion Report must contain the following information as described in 22 CFR 226.51(d) (or any successor provision(s)), covering the full period of the award: an executive summary of the accomplishments and results achieved; an overall description of the activities and accomplishments; a summary of problems/obstacles encountered during implementation; an assessment of the performance in accomplishing the project's objectives; significance of these activities; findings; comments and recommendations; and other pertinent information. This report is expected to be made available publicly and must not include proprietary information. Reports must incorporate as many graphics (maps, photos, charts, etc.) as possible and must include all project and evaluation tools and materials, as attachments.

All reports (quarterly, annual, and final) are to be submitted in draft form to USAID at least one week before the due date for review and comment, and will be returned in time for final versions to be complete by the due date.

Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC)

All documents uploaded to the DEC https://dec.usaid.gov/dec/content/submit.aspx should be written with the understanding that they may be publicaly accessible.

Therefore, USAID generally suggests the removal of the following for documents that will be posted:

• Trade secrets or privileged or private commercial or financial information;

• Personnel, medical or similar information;

• Information which if released would put your organization or an individual at risk; and

• Any other information which your organization believes is sensitive for security purposes.

EgyptInfo

Each fiscal quarter the Recipient must update their program information on USAID's Egypt Info website.

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SECTION IX - SPECIAL PROVISIONS

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IX.A   Executive Order on Terrorism Financing (FEB 2002)

The Contractor/Recipient is reminded that U.S. Executive Orders and U.S. law prohibits transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to, individuals and organizations associated with terrorism. It is the responsibility of the contractor/recipient to ensure compliance with these Executive Orders and laws. This provision must be included in all subcontracts/subawards issued under this contract/agreement.

IX.B   Training Results and Information Network (TRAINET)

Exchange Visitors and Training

The recipient will conform to USAID Automated Directives System (ADS) Chapter 252 – Visa Compliance for Exchange Visitors and ADS 253 – Training for Development, as well as USAID/Egypt-specific requirements for processing of J-1 Exchange Visitors.

The Recipient will enter applicable information into TraiNet for any participant Training, third-country training and in-country training that is funded through this award.

Information and assistance on ADS 253 requirements is currently available from the following USAID/Egypt personnel: Samah Eid seid@usaid.gov 2522-6891

IX.C   Vetting Requirements of Sub-Awardees

Prior to the provision of funding by the Recipient to its sub-grantees ("sub-awardees "), the Recipient shall conduct all screening procedures and due diligence on sub-awardees and key individuals of the sub-awardees, including a check of sub-awardees and such key individuals not screened at the time of award by the Agreement Officer to ensure compliance with Executive Order 13224 and U.S. law prohibiting transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to individuals and organizations associated with terrorism. The Recipient will screen names of its sub-awardees and the key individuals of such sub-awardees against the Specially Designated Nationals List ("SDN" list) administered by the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control ("OFAC") http://www.ustreas.gov/offices/enforcement/ofac/sdn/ ; UN's 1267 Committee List on Al-Qaida and the Taliban and Associated Individuals and Entities: http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/consolist.shtml ; and State Department's Terrorist Exclusion List: http://www.state.gov/s/ct/list/ (see ADS 303.3.8.a.4 and ADS 303.3.9) and the Applicant has a record of business integrity and does not appear on the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) on this web-site: https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/

"Key individual" means (i) principal officers of the organization's governing body (e.g., chairman, vice chairman, treasurer and secretary of the board of directors or board of trustees); (ii) the principal officer and deputy principal officer of the organization (e.g., executive director, deputy director, president, vice president); (iii) the program manager or chief of party for the USG-financed program; and (iv) any other person with significant responsibilities for administration of the USG-financed activities or resources."